

MEMORANDUM FOR: All NOAA Travelers

FROM: Jon P. Alexander
Director, Finance Office/Comptroller

SUBJECT: Travel Advisory 08-6
Contractors Use of Government Contract
City-Pair Airfares/Rental Car Procedures

CONTRACTOR TRAVEL:

Each year GSA negotiates with the airlines and awards contracts for air transportation for travelers on official Government travel under the city-pair program. These contracts represent a very significant discount to the Federal Government, but are restricted to Federal employees and invitational travelers traveling on official business, and are **not offered to contractors**. However, there have been many instances where contractors are taking advantage of contract city-pair airfares by way of an approved travel authorization. The airlines are becoming increasingly concerned over the amount of unauthorized use of city-pair fares by contractors who are abusing the program deliberately or who are receiving incorrect advice about their eligibility for such fares.

Invitational travelers are defined as individuals serving without pay whose travel is paid in whole or part by NOAA. Since a contractor receives a fee for their services, they are not considered an invitational traveler and therefore do not qualify for the city-pair program. Continued use of city-pair airfares by contractors could jeopardize the city-pair program for Federal employees, thereby causing a substantial increase in travel costs. In order to preserve the Government city-pair program, all of a contractor's travel expenses, including airfare, shall be included in their contract and **not on a travel authorization**.

RENTAL CAR PROCEDURES:

Employees procuring a rental car for official business are required to book their car rental reservations through ADTRAV to ensure that they receive Government rates that include full coverage insurance. Within CONUS locations, (defined as the 48 contiguous states) employees are required to rent only from rental car companies that offer Government rates that include full insurance coverage. Employees cannot be reimbursed for additional rental car insurance when traveling within CONUS.

Within OCONUS locations, (defined as U.S. possessions and foreign areas) some of the rental car companies offer Government rates and full insurance coverage, but most do not. Employees who are not covered in OCONUS locations are required to purchase the additional insurance to cover them in the event that they are involved in an accident. The additional insurance is a reimbursable travel expense that can be claimed on a travel voucher.

Regardless of the location, it is important for employees renting a vehicle for official business to always request the Government rate and to verify if insurance is included or not.

Please direct any questions regarding the information in this advisory to Rachael Wivell on (301) 444-2136.

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